

Facts:

- ✓ In 2002, greater than 61% of Tennesseans were either overweight or obese.
- ✓ The prevalence of being overweight for adolescents has tripled in the past 2 decades.
- ✓ The self reported overweight or obesity prevalence among Tennessee high school students was 15% in 2003.
- ✓ The increases in overweight and obesity have occurred in all ages, racial and ethnic groups, and both genders.
- ✓ Overweight and obesity are associated with heart disease, certain types of cancer, type 2 diabetes, stroke, arthritis, breathing problems, and psychological disorders, such as depression
- ✓ It is estimated that \$1.8 billion was spent in adult obesity – attributable medical expenditures in Tennessee in 2003.
- ✓ In women, overweight and obesity are higher among members of racial and ethnic minority populations than in non-Hispanic white women.
- ✓ For all racial and ethnic groups combined, women of lower socioeconomic status (income < 130 percent of poverty threshold) are approximately 50% more likely to be obese than those of higher socioeconomic status.

Health Consequences

Premature death

- The risk of death rises with increasing weight.
- Even moderate weight excess (10-20 pounds for a person of average height) increases the risk of death, particularly among adults aged 30-64 years.
- Individuals who are obese have a 50 to 100% increased risk of premature death from all causes, compared to individuals with a healthy weight.

Heart disease

- The incidence of heart disease (heart attack, congestive heart failure, sudden cardiac death, angina, or chest pain, and abnormal heart rhythm) is increased in persons who are overweight or obese.
- High blood pressure is twice as common in adults who are obese than in those who are at a healthy weight.
- Obesity is associated with elevated triglycerides and decreased HDL cholesterol ("good cholesterol").

Diabetes

- A weight gain of 11-18 pounds increases a person's risk of developing type 2 diabetes to twice that of individuals who have not gained weight.
- Over 80% of people with diabetes are overweight or obese.



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Cancer

- Overweight and obesity are associated with an increased risk for some types of cancer including endometrial, colon, gall bladder, prostate, kidney, and postmenopausal breast cancer.
- Women gaining more than 20 pounds from age 18 to midlife double their risk of postmenopausal breast cancer, compared to women whose weight remains stable.

Reproductive complications

- Obesity during pregnancy is associated with increased risk of death in both the baby and the mother and increases the risk of maternal high blood pressure by 10 times.
- In addition to many other complications, women who are obese during pregnancy are more likely to have gestational diabetes and problems with labor and delivery.
- Infants born to women who are obese during pregnancy are more likely to be high birthweight and, therefore, may face a higher rate of C-section delivery and low blood sugar (which can be associated with brain damage and seizures).
- Obesity in premenopausal women is associated with irregular menstrual cycles and infertility.

Benefits of weight loss

- Weight loss, as modest as 5 to 15% of total body weight in a person who is overweight or obese, reduces the risk factors for some diseases, particularly heart disease.
- Weight loss can result in lower blood pressure, lower blood sugar, and improved cholesterol levels.
- A person with Body Mass Index (BMI) above the healthy weight range may benefit from weight loss, especially if he or she has other health risk factors, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, smoking, diabetes, a sedentary lifestyle, and a personal and/or family history of heart disease.

- $$\text{BMI} = \left[\frac{\text{Weight in pounds}}{(\text{Height in inches}) \times (\text{Height in inches})} \right] \times 703$$

- $\text{BMI} \geq 25$ is considered overweight.
- $\text{BMI} \geq 30$ is considered obese.